



COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

PREPARED BY



WHAT WE ARE DOING DURING COVID-19



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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated challenges many families and service providers in Santa Clara County were already facing, including financial insecurity and physical and mental health issues. In response, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County swiftly and strategically transformed its service provision to meet community needs. This report describes each department's efforts through June 30, 2020, except where otherwise noted, but FIRST 5 Santa Clara's response is ongoing as the pandemic continues to impact families and providers. Below are key highlights of the efforts of FIRST 5 and its partners.



- + Nearly \$5 million in new revenue was secured between March and June 2020 to provide relief for the county's hardest-hit families and providers.
- + Over \$1 million federal Paycheck Protection Program loan was received.
- + Claim for approximately \$150,000 was submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to recoup the expense of purchasing the calming kits.



- + A "needs tracker" was developed and utilized to track family needs and provide appropriate referrals and resources.
- + Food, calming kits, resource guides, wipes, diapers, formula, and personal protective equipment were distributed at approximately two dozen community sites.
- + Data plans, technology, training, and technical assistance, were provided to family resource centers to support virtual service delivery.



- + State IMPACT funding was repurposed to financially support 182 child care providers enrolled in QUALITY MATTERS... a STRONG START for kids.
- + Personal protective equipment, diapers, books, and calming kits were provided to family child care homes.
- + With the support of providers and local government partners, child care slots were secured for essential workers in the county.



- + Health education workshops and court/re-entry services were delivered virtually.
- + A court/re-entry resource distribution program was developed to serve justice-impacted families who faced barriers in accessing the general distribution.
- + FIRST 5 grantee Roots became a COVID-19 testing site, conducting an average of 350-370 tests per week.



- + Core trainings, including SEEDS of Learning, CLASS, 24/7 Dad, SEEDS of Parenting, and Parents Helping Parents trainings were delivered virtually.
- + Training and technical assistance were provided to 96 family child care home providers, enabling them to participate in virtual trainings.
- + Materials for 2,700 activity kits for family resource centers were secured.



- + Commission and committee meetings were smoothly transitioned to online platforms.
- + An extensive community resource guide was designed and distributed.
- + An online "Digital Divide" advocacy rally was held for the community of San Jose.

Finance and Administration

In response to the impact of COVID-19 and the Governor's stay-at-home order, each FIRST 5 Santa Clara County initiative transformed its approach to meet the needs of children and families. This unexpected shift in community needs and service provision demanded additional resources. FIRST 5 Santa Clara County secured 11 external grants between March and June 2020 to support the innovative service delivery required during the stay-at-home orders, to stabilize child care in the community, and for resources like food and baby supplies to meet the immediate needs of families. These grants totaled \$4,866,786. FIRST 5 also received a private donation of \$10,000. Since the end of June, FIRST 5 has continued to receive funding for its ongoing efforts, including \$3.5 million from the City of San Jose for child care stabilization.

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County External COVID-Relief Grants Obtained FY2019/20



FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Finance and Administration department played a crucial role in organizing and satisfying the contractual reporting requirements of the many additional funds and grants drawn down across the various departments. In addition, Finance and Administration applied for and received a federal Paycheck Protection Program loan through the Small Business Administration for \$1,102,615. A claim for approximately \$131,000 has also been approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to recoup the expense of purchasing calming kits, which were distributed to families and family child care homes by FIRST 5 Santa Clara County.



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Family Strengthening and Support Initiative

To understand the shifting needs of the families during the pandemic, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County engaged its extensive partner network in a broad assessment of family needs. A “needs tracker” was deployed across all family resource centers as well as other key initiatives such as the re-entry program and court programs. When families called these programs, staff recorded families’ needs and immediately provided resources, referrals, and ongoing case management when needed. Diapers and food were the most common needs, reported by 61% and 31% of families, respectively.



FIRST 5 staff also undertook a massive effort coordinating resource distribution to families across Santa Clara County. To create a wide-reaching distribution system accessible to members of all communities, FIRST 5 reached out to family resource centers and school districts to secure well-known physical locations for distribution efforts. Through these partnerships, FIRST 5 was also able to leverage the personnel power of these organizations to distribute food, calming kits, resource guides, baby wipes, diapers, certified infant formula, and personal protective equipment at approximately two dozen community sites.

First 5 California received \$4 million to distribute supplies statewide and sent a portion of these supplies to Santa Clara County. FIRST 5 Santa Clara County also obtained the following grants to purchase the baby supplies that were distributed:

- + City of San Jose - \$1.5 million (\$752,000 of which was utilized before July 2020)
- + Packard Foundation - \$100,000
- + Santa Clara Family Health Plan - \$50,000
- + Sunlight Giving - \$50,000
- + California Wellness Foundation - \$10,000
- + Private donation of \$10,000



Resource Distribution by the Numbers

- + 632,800 diapers and
- + 5,468 cans of formula were distributed to
- + 4,262 families between April and June



In addition to material resource provision, FIRST 5 helped the family resource centers and their families transition to virtual service delivery. For example, individual support sessions were conducted via teleconferencing; workshops and children’s activities were presented on YouTube and other social media; and SEEDS of Learning trainings were posted online. Informal Parent Café support groups also met virtually to address social isolation and build community among caregivers. Also, in collaboration with family resource centers, the Bridge Library conducted virtual, multilingual storytime sessions.

Finally, the ParentChild+ program quickly pivoted to offering virtual home visiting and delivering food and other supplies to support families. FIRST 5 secured the following grants to support these efforts:

- + California Family Resource Association - \$46,158 for tablets, hotspots, and webcams for approximately 60 family resource center staff
- + ParentChild+ - \$32,000 for Chromebooks, gift cards, and art supplies for families
- + \$46,000 federal Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) grant for an expansive data plan

Early Learning Initiative

In response to the challenges and limitations posed by COVID-19, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Early Learning Initiative promptly adapted its supports to address the needs of child care providers in the community. For example, Communities of Practice for providers enrolled in QUALITY MATTERS... a STRONG START for kids (QUALITY MATTERS), were held virtually, and FIRST 5 partnered with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) to connect these providers to essential supplies and reimbursement funds from the state. FIRST 5 also repurposed \$182,000 of First 5 California IMPACT funding to financially support 182 providers. Repurposed IMPACT funds also provided emergency child care for the City of San Jose fire department staff and first responders. FIRST 5 covered the child care costs for children ages 0-3, and ultimately served 18 children.

Since March 2020, FIRST 5's Early Learning Initiative has advocated for funding to support the stabilization of child care for the community, including \$7.1 million that was ultimately made available to FIRST 5 and its partners. This funding and partnerships with Santa Clara County and the City of San Jose resulted in the following supports:

SCHOLARSHIP

Child care tuition for 12 months for up to 40 families who reside in the City of San Jose.

STABILIZATION FUND

A \$10,000 Stabilization Fund for eligible FCCH providers to support the financial recovery and stabilization of their business.

PRESCHOOL EXPANSION

Expansion of 17 Head Start/State Preschool part-day classrooms to full-day classrooms, serving over 200 families.



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182 QUALITY MATTERS
 providers were financially supported to address challenges caused by the pandemic
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FIRST 5 grantee Healthier Kids Foundation also made calls to connect child care providers with essential workers, including Santa Clara County health care workers and City of San Jose Public Safety employees, using Alternative Placement Vouchers.



In addition, FIRST 5 partnered with the SCCOE, family resource centers, and Healthier Kids Foundation to deliver supplies critical to the continued operation of child care programs. Supplies included personal protective equipment, diapers, books, and calming kits, funded by First 5 California and the California Department of Education.

Health and Wellness Initiative

Immediately following the stay-at-home order, FIRST 5 Health and Wellness grantees Healthier Kids Foundation, Roots Community Health Center, and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Family Support transitioned to virtual service provision, including delivering health education workshops over Zoom and Facebook Live. Likewise, Child Advocates of Silicon Valley, Family Law Treatment Court, and Dependency Wellness Court conducted virtual sessions via Zoom as well as engaging families via phone and text. Health and Wellness grantees completed budget revisions to purchase the technology needed to support virtual services.

Staff in Health and Wellness programs also connected families to FIRST 5 family resource centers for diapers, baby wipes, food, certified infant formula, and other resources. Additionally, to center equity in the resource distribution efforts, a unique route was established for justice-impacted families who might struggle to access resources through the general countywide distribution due to challenges such as a lack of access to transportation, physical and mental disabilities, and lack of child care. In response to these barriers, the FIRST 5 Re-entry and Dependency Wellness Court Program Staff launched the monthly Court/Re-entry Essential Supplies Distributions in April of 2020, offering in-person distributions at other locations within the community and doing door-to-door deliveries, as needed. Over 200 families have been reached with this program, including one mother who said, "Thank you, I really appreciate this service. I hope it continues." The in-person distributions also allowed staff to connect families to other services in the community. For example, one mother was connected to the African American Community Services Agency (AACSA) in order to address issues relating to domestic violence.

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Julian’s mother Rocio said that when she was laid off from her job, worries about affording baby supplies added to other stressors she experienced as a new parent during COVID-19, including fears about her child being exposed to the virus. She expressed gratitude for the diapers she received through the FIRST 5 grantee Healthier Kids Foundation, saying “I think this program is a blessing. It gives us mothers a relief.” She said many new parents like her are struggling during COVID-19, and the baby supply distribution program “gives us hope that things will get better.”

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Roots Health Center was also financially supported by FIRST 5 to become a COVID-19 testing site. Roots Health Center redeployed 17 employees to the Antioch Baptist Church in downtown San Jose every Wednesday to staff the testing site. Between May 20 and July 29, 2020, staff conducted 2,837 tests, identifying 66 people carrying the virus. These efforts are continuing, with an average of 350-370 tests conducted per week.

In addition, the NICU repositioned its FIRST 5-funded data coordinators to conduct a study of pregnant women diagnosed with COVID-19. The study aims to understand the risk of COVID-19 virus

transmission from infected mothers to their fetuses. The study will help inform newborn care practice and policy for infants born to mothers who have COVID-19. Per state and national dental association guidelines and the county’s shelter-in-place order, FIRST 5-supported dental clinics were open for emergency services only March-May 2020. These clinics reopened in June for preventive care with new safety and social distancing guidelines in place.

Vision, hearing, and oral health screenings traditionally conducted by FIRST 5 grantee Healthier Kids Foundation were suspended due to school closures and social distancing guidelines. Screening staff were repositioned to support families over the phone and to register families for diaper and certified infant formula distributions, an effort funded by the Santa Clara County Emergency Operations Center. Beginning in October 2020, staff began conducting screenings outdoors and at drive-through sites.

Another Healthier Kids Foundation program, Baby Gateway, continued operating as usual. Following discharge from the hospital, new parents received a delivery with a box of baby supplies, including diapers, baby wipes, and certified infant formula.

Healthier Kids Foundation repurposed funds in their contract and conducted external fundraising to purchase additional supplies for new parents.

The Public Health Nursing home visiting program shifted to providing virtual home visits to families. Program staff were also tasked to support the county’s emergency response, limiting the number of families they could see, but home visitors continued to connect families to health and social services and resources to improve parenting skills. Finally, the Public Health Lactation promotion program funded by FIRST 5 paused outreach events but is working with birthing hospitals to provide informational and outreach materials to new parents.



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96 FCCH providers enrolled in virtual trainings with the support of FIRST 5 staff

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Community of Learning Initiative

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Community of Learning professional development offerings moved online following the emergence of COVID-19. Many of its core trainings were offered virtually, including the last three SEEDS of Learning for Family Child Care modules, the CLASS Primer and Introduction to CLASS trainings, 24/7 Dad, SEEDS of Parenting, and Parents Helping Parents trainings for providers serving children with special needs and their families.

To ensure that all of our participants could access and benefit from online training, FIRST 5 provided technical assistance and training to 96 family child care home providers enrolled in myTeachstone, enabling them to take CLASS trainings on improving student-teacher interactions remotely.

In addition to parent training and partner professional development, FIRST 5's Community of Learning worked with the Santa Clara County Office of Education Inclusion Collaborative to manage the development and distribution of 2,700 family activity kits through family resource centers. These activity kits included age-appropriate children's books, activity/coloring books, crayons, playdough, a COVID-19 family resource guide, toothbrush kits, Census 2020 materials, and calming kits. Materials for these kits were provided in-kind or with funds from the following FIRST 5 community partners:

- City of San Jose
- Healthier Kids Foundation
- San Jose Public Library
- Santa Clara County Public Library

Communications Initiative

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Communications department played a critical role in supporting the organization's shift to virtual services and supports. Primarily engaged in virtual activities even prior to COVID-19, the department was well prepared to offer technical assistance to other departments and smoothly transition Commission and committee meetings to online platforms.

The Communications department's efforts also pivoted to address changing community needs. For example, staff designed and coordinated an extensive community resource guide, which was translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Tagalog, and made available to the public in both print and electronic formats. Printed resource guides were provided to families as part of activity kits distributed in partnership with other FIRST 5 departments and family resource centers. The electronic resource guide was posted on FIRST 5's website and distributed via e-newsletter to approximately 2,800 people. Communications also provided child care sites serving essential workers educational materials for their classrooms and tote bags used for the countywide distribution of diapers, baby wipes, and certified infant formula.

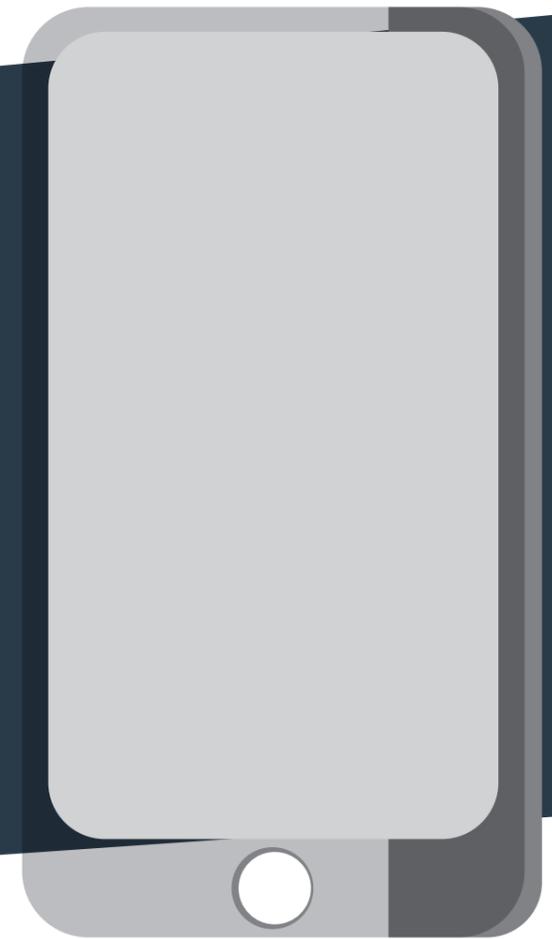


Though printed resource guides and educational materials were distributed during COVID-19, Communications' utilization of printed promotional materials was otherwise greatly reduced, replaced by online promotion efforts, including social media campaigns. Communications produced numerous videos, both internally and in collaboration with community partners, to capture the important role FIRST 5 serves in providing a social safety net for the most vulnerable residents of Santa Clara County. Similarly, Communications moved its advocacy activities online. These efforts included an online "Digital Divide" rally attended by 81 people, which was held in partnership with the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Franklin McKinley School District, and Alum Rock Union School District, and was moderated by FIRST 5 Santa Clara County's Chief Executive Officer Jolene Smith.

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A comprehensive community resource guide in 5 languages was designed and delivered in print and electronic formats.

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FIRST 5 Santa Clara County will be a catalyst for ensuring that the developmental needs of children prenatal through age 5 are a priority in all sectors of the community.

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